

Response Under 37 CFR 1.116
Expedited Procedure
Examining Group 2839
Application No. 10/519,601
Paper Dated: July 15, 2008
In Reply to USPTO Correspondence of January 15, 2008
Attorney Docket No. 3135-048013

REMARKS

Claims 19-37 are currently pending in this application with claim 19 being in independent form. Claim 19 is currently amended and claim 37 is newly added. Support for these claim amendments are provided in the specification at page 1, lines 6-24, page 1, line 30 and page 2, line 10. In view of these claim amendments, reconsideration of the rejections and allowance of the claims is respectfully requested.

Claims 19-24 and 27-36 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Forman (U.S. Patent No. 4,279,469). The Office Action asserts that Forman teaches each and every feature of the invention including at least one rigid component 38 adapted to grip a sleeve 42 of a signal line 12 wherein the gripping means includes a spring element 28 made of a flexible material which engages and exerts a biasing force on the rigid component and away from the signal line to remove load or loads on the rigid component. The gripping means can be released or partially released from the signal line. The signal line is influenced by loads on the signal line and the signal line passes in a smooth line in the gripping means.

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection for the following reasons.

The invention of claim 19, as amended, is directed towards a gripping means for gripping on a signal line, which signal line is embodied such that the signal that is fed through the line is adapted to be influenced by loads exerted externally on the signal line. The gripping means includes at least one rigid component adapted to grip on a sleeve of the signal line. Additionally, the gripping means comprise a spring element engaging on the rigid component *to exert a biasing force to the rigid component and away from the signal line to remove the load of the rigid component from the signal line.* The signal line of the present invention is an optical cable *wherein the spring element engaging on the at least one rigid component allows for displacement of the gripped cable by external forces.*

As amended, claim 19 specifies the functionality of the spring element in relation to the rigid component. Particularly, the spring element of the claimed invention engages the rigid component, thereby allowing for displacement of the gripped cable by external forces.

Applicant asserts that the Forman patent does not teach or suggest the spring element of the claimed invention that allows for displacement of the gripped cable.

Specifically, the “spring element 28” of Forman does *not* bias the “rigid sleeve element 38” away from the “signal line 12”, to remove the load of the rigid component from the signal line. Forman is directed to a cable connector for joining optically the respective terminal ends of one or more pairs of glass fiber optic cables. See col. 1, lines 11-14 of the reference. This cable connector, for joining the cable ends, is designed to *prevent displacement by external forces* in order to minimize degradation of the signals. Accordingly, the cable connector of Forman achieves the exact opposite result as the present invention. Forman is not suitable for acting as a sensor and is, in fact, concerned with rigid fixing of a connection of optical cables to prevent signal distortion. The connector of Forman is aimed at gripping and protecting the cable from any distortions as much as possible and, therefore, cannot be relied upon for achieving the goal of the present invention, nor would it lead one having ordinary skill in the art to redesign this cable-protective connector into a gripping means which improves the distortion of the cable.

The connector of Forman is concerned with permanent fixation and stabilization of the position of the optical cables. Evidence of this is shown at col. 1, lines 46-50 of Forman, which states that the alignment sleeves enable precise and **rigid** alignment of the cables joined therein. The resilient collar permits transverse adjustments only during the mating of the connector parts, not during use in the connected state. Col. 2, lines 39-50 of Forman states that the sleeve 38 is made of metal (which would not allow for any distortion of the cable), and states that the sleeve 38 **rigidly** supports the terminal end of the cables (col. 2, line 43).

Additionally, the connector of Forman contains a resilient collar 28; however, this collar 28 serves to axially align the cables during mating (col. 2, lines 42-46). After mating the cable ends, the resilient collar 28 serves to absorb shock forces (col. 2, lines 46-48) and does, therefore, not enhance sensitivity towards external pressure, but reduces it.

In view of the reasons set forth above, it is respectfully requested that the final rejection of claims 19-24 and 27-36 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) be withdrawn as Forman fails to anticipate each and every feature of the claimed invention. Additionally, it would not have

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been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to modify the connector of Forman to achieve the present invention, as such would require significant modification thereof.

Next, claims 25-26 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Forman in view of Hinze (U.S. Patent No. 5,703,754).

Hinze is relied upon as teaching materials having a hardness of between 10-100 shores. Hinze fails to overcome the deficiencies of the Forman connector. Hinze shows adhesive sealants as materials used for construction of a circuit board and are, thus, covered by the compound, a Shore hardness of 40-50 after curing of the sealant are preferred (col. 3, lines 34-35). The function of this hardness is apparently to make the board tamper deterrent and tamper evident (col. 3, line 42). This implies that the cured sealant has a lack of resilience, as resilient materials would come back to their original form after a tampering attempt.

Moreover, as stated above, the combination of Forman with Hinze would not lead to the invention as recited in base claim 19, as the spring element that allows for displacement of the gripped cable is still lacking in Forman.

For the reasons set forth above, it is respectfully requested that the final rejection of claims 25-26 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be withdrawn as the combination of Forman with Hinze fails to render these claims obvious.

CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing remarks, reconsideration of the rejection and allowance of pending claims 19-37 is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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